

## ***Common Misconceptions:***

1. Wisconsin DNR has complete control over the duck season.
  - a. Migratory hunting seasons are regulated first by a framework put in place by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Within this framework, the DNR has the ability to structure the season but look to sound science and the hunters to decide the final season structure. After talking to conservation groups and organizations and gathering input through contacts and surveys, the WDNR propose season structures that are based on the information the DNR have received to that point and then ask the public what they think of our proposal and whether or not they approve of each item. The WDNR goes through this process every year.

2. *The Wisconsin DNR just began taking public input on the seasons in 2018.*

- a. The WDNR has taken public input on the season/zone structure for the waterfowl season for decades. We did begin a new process in 2018 using social media to get our message out to more people. The WDNR is considering ways to make it easier to submit public input with online surveys or streamed hearings.



3. *Zone Changes should be up for discussion every year.*

- a. Per federal regulations, zone changes can take place every 5 years. Zones have to provide a “more reasonable distribution of harvest opportunity for hunters throughout a state. The border of these zones must be contiguous. USFWS allows states 4 zone/split options:
  - No zones with option of 2 splits or closed period (3 open season blocks)
  - Two zones with option of one season split (the closed period can differ by zone)
  - Three zones with one season split option (the closed period can differ by zone)
  - Four zones with no season splits options

4. *Why do we only get 60 days/ 6 ducks and other states get more days and ducks in the bag?*

- a. North America is broken up into 4 different flyways. Wisconsin resides in the Mississippi Flyway with 13 other states and 3 Canadian provinces. The Mississippi Flyway has 50% of all of the waterfowl hunters in the country therefor the number of hunters in our flyway give us a possible greater impact on waterfowl during the hunting season.



5. *Hunter 1 wants to hunt early and should be able to pick his 60 days and hunter 2 wants to hunt late and should be able to pick his.*
- a. Within the Mississippi Flyway, Wisconsin is allowed 60-day seasons. When those 60 days are used is a state decision, but those 60 days must be taken as a state and not as a hunter. Meaning Wisconsin hunters have 60 days and need to work together using zones and splits to create a season that works for the majority of hunters.
6. *The Wisconsin DNR needs to open a sandhill crane hunting season!*
- a. The WDNR does not have that authority. To establish any hunting season on a species that doesn't already have a hunting season for example a sandhill crane hunting season, first legislation must be passed to create a hunting season. Sandhill Cranes are a huntable species within the Mississippi Flyway and there is a process identified within the Eastern Population Sandhill Crane Management Plan. However, legislation must be passed first in Wisconsin before the WDNR can begin the process of making a Sandhill Crane season a reality.
7. *Instead of an early teal season can we have a bonus teal season like states out to the west of us?*

- a. When first given the option for an additional teal opportunity Wisconsin was only given an option for an early teal season. The WDNR had only taken public input on an early teal season and subsequently, USFWS offered us the option of a bonus teal option. The WDNR chose to go with the early teal season as that is what we had taken public input on. USFWS will not allow us to switch to a bonus teal option as we had already chosen the early teal option per their regulations.



8. *When I register for HIP and get asked questions how do they determine harvest from that isn't that inaccurate?*
- a. When you answer the HIP questions every year when you buy your license your answers will put you into 3-4 "buckets". Those "buckets" range from low to high harvest. The US Fish and Wildlife Service then select hunters from each state randomly and ask them to turn in wings from all waterfowl killed from that season or to keep a hunting log. Those wings/logs are then sent to USFWS and analyzed to create the HIP harvest data they post every year.

9. Wisconsin is missing an opportunity to hunt snow geese in the spring how do we not take advantage of that.

- a. Spring snow goose harvest is a USFWS enacted conservation order not a hunting season. It is a population management tool to curb potential degradation of migratory bird habitat by these geese when they concentrate in areas in large numbers.



10. The main push of waterfowl through Wisconsin happens after the season closes.

- a. Although we recognize there are birds around, the main migration of birds typically comes through the last week in October through the second week of November during a typical year. The concentrations of birds hunters are seeing after the season are just birds now being concentrated due to waterbodies freezing up in your area.